

Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to force their stations to air an anti-Kerry documentary days before the election is a clear example of the dangers of media consolidation. It is not an example of balanced, historical reportage; we are not also seeing documentation of Bush's fratf-dodging. Instead, we will be seeing what amounts to a long, dramatid political ad, under the guise od a television show, and completely violating the laws of the FCC.

Sinclair uses the public airwaves free of charge, and is obligated by law to serve the public interest. But when large companies control the airwaves, we get more of what's good for the bottom line and less of what we need for our democracy. We want to see news that is both national and international, of course, but we want to see news from our own communities, made be those in our communities -- not mega-news by these conglomerates. Instead of something produced at "News Central" far away, it's more important that we see real people from our own communities and more substantive news about issues that matter.

Sinclair's actions show why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. They show why the license renewal process needs to involve more than a returned postcard. Thank you.